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TAGS: OPRC, KMDR, KPAO, GM
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: 9/11 IRAN MIDEAST UNIFIL DOHA;BERLIN

A.   Lead Stories Summary
B.   (U.S.)   9/11 Anniversary
B.   (Iran)   Nuclear Program
D.   (Mideast)   Hamas-Abbas Agreement
E.   (Mideast)   UNIFIL Mission
F.   (Economic)   Doha Round


A.   Lead Stories Summary
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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HEADLINES

Navy Mission Coming Closer (Frankfurter Allgemeine)

Health Care Reform Is Dividing Coalition (Sueddeutsche Zeitung)

U.S. Holds Four Minutes Of Silence (Die Welt)

Germany Sends More Than 2,000 Soldiers (Frankfurter Rundschau)

Al-Qaida Threatening New Terror Attack (Tagesspiegel)

Merkel Loses Control Over Health Care Reform (Berliner Zeitung)

Editorials focused on the outcome of the local elections in Lower Saxony, the debate over health care reform, and the outcome of the parliamentary elections in Montenegro. ZDF-TV's early evening newscast heute and ARD-TV's early evening newscast Tagesschau opened with stories on the 9/11 anniversary.

B. (U.S.) 9/11 Anniversary

1. Christoph L|tgert commented on ARD-TV's (national channel one) late evening newscast Tagesthemen (9/11):

"We may consider it sacrilege to name Osama bin Laden and George W. Bush in one breath, but I personally think that both have made the world much less safe. With his fight against terror, Bush was a compliant puppet of unrestrained neoconservatives in the United States and at the same time a servant of terror godfather Osama bin Laden. Bush is primarily responsible for the global policy consequences of 9/11 that became worse than the disaster itself....

"As far as international law is concerned, the war against Iraq was a crime, an end to the mayhem, bloodshed, and civil war is not in sight. The most recent Lebanon conflict would have been unthinkable without the radicalization of the Islamic world, a development that Bush stirred up. The same is true for the threatening attitude of Iran's horrible President Ahmadinejad. With a growing distance from the events, the contribution of the former Red-Green government are becoming clear when it disassociated itself from this disastrous and unspeakable U.S. president.... It will take a long time for the free world to repair what Osama bin Laden and George W. Bush inflicted on it, if it is possible at all. And it will be challenged again and again not to surrender freedoms that it wants to defend."

2. National radio station Deutschlandfunk of Cologne (9/11) broadcast the following commentary by Ulrich Leidholdt:

"In the Middle East, George W. Bush has forfeited the sympathy for the innocent victims of New York that seized the majority of people in the Middle East, too. But his mixture of lies and missionary zeal have cost him his credibility, and not only there. The gap between the Arab world and the West has widened and is deeper than ever. Since 9/11, extremism has dramatically increased.

"The spiritual change in the Arab states has hardly been perceived in the West. Here many people say they have to suffer a 9/11 every few years: in Iraq, in Gaza, or in Lebanon but this leaves the West unmoved. The West continues to firmly support Israel and justifies

its violation of UN resolutions. It is a massive loss of credibility that is pushing them away from the West. People there perceive the war on terror also as a war on Islam.... It is only possible to find a way out of the violence with political means. But the root of all evil must finally be tackled: the unresolved conflict between Israelis and Palestinians...."

3. Joachim Knuth had this to say in a commentary on regional radio station Norddeutscher Rundfunk of Hamburg (9/11):

"The United States can no longer claim to have the moral authority. The nice picture of democracy has received a few ugly scratches. Will it really be possible to seriously praise the Western model of freedom in the public opinion struggle with Islamic terror if the United States is lax about torture and the rule of law? The 'old Europe'...has not succumbed to this mistake. Chancellor Merkel's criticism of the secret CIA prisons clearly expresses this. Those who defend themselves against violent fanatics must do this with the means laid down by the rule of law, not with the means of medieval crusaders.... Those who want to show consideration for the security feelings of the people must do this with preventive measures, anti-terror databases, and show moderation when doing this, and not dismantle step by step the democratic model of society out of fear of violence...."

4. New York correspondent Rainer S|tfeld commented on regional radio station Westdeutscher Rundfunk of Cologne (9/11):

"In New York and the United States there is growing suspicion that their own government is exploiting 9/11, and there is growing concern that the responsible officials in Washington have opened Pandora's Box rather than containing terror, that the fight against Al-Qaida and Co. ` la Rumsfeld has nurtured the ground for more terror cells and - what is even worse - has divided the world and the international community. That is why there cannot be a clear Western answer to the new dangers in Tehran or the Middle East, without real dialogue with Islam. That is why suspicion and fear of

the next attack remain here in New York...."

5. Center-right Mdrkische Allgemeine of Potsdam (9/12) judged:

"The new quality of threat has immediate consequences for people in democratic societies. How many restrictions are they willing to accept in favor of greater security? The term 'war on terror'...is no exaggeration. That is why it is so damaging that the U.S. president and his government have based their activities often on half-truths and lies and ignored legal principles on which they insist elsewhere. This damage can no longer be repaired by this government. George W. Bush's successor must regain new confidence to enable democratic states to stand closer together in this fight in the future than they do today."

6. "The President Who Polarizes"

Thomas Spang noted in an editorial in left-of-center Weser Kurier of Bremen (9/11):

"Five years after the attacks from New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania, a sober balance sheet comes to the fore when taking stock. The fight against terrorism can be won only if the attractiveness of the free world is greater than its military potential to impose sanctions. As on the day after 9/11, when the international community spontaneously understood what was at stake. Mr. President give us back the American Dream!"

7. Centrist Heilbronner Stimme (9/11) had this to say:

"On the anniversary of 9/11, America stirred up the sympathy of the world. [How great would it be] if we could turn the clock back? Then, the United States would not have to betray its values through torture and secret prisons. Then, the West would not be divided by the Iraq War."

8. Center-right Klnische Rundschau (9/12) observed:

"Chancellor Merkel and Interior Minister Schduble have now rightfully criticized the position of the U.S. president, who wants to keep secret CIA prisons and approve tough interrogation methods that come close to the term torture. But Bush also knows that he needs the transatlantic partners to keep the United States safe. But in the short-term, only one thing counts: the Congressional elections in November where the Republicans are fighting to keep their majorities. We must fear that, at least until then, the Texan will continue to politically flex his muscles...to tell the American citizens that the security interests of the country are in better hands with him than with the Democrats."

9. "Bush's Loss Of Support"

Friedemann Diederichs argued in an editorial in centrist Flensburger Tageblatt (9/11), centrist Schweriner Volkszeitung (9/11) and center-right Nordwest-Zeitung of Oldenburg (9/11):

"The cardinal errors of the George W. Bush, who was inexperienced in foreign policy, and his neoconservative advisors...are as clear as daylight. Why place Saddam Hussein in the crosshairs, even though he had no links to the 9/11 attackers who almost all came from Saudi Arabia? In addition, there is no effective strategy in the response to radical Islamists. The controversial Middle East policy of the U.S. president and the frivolous paternalism of the partners - secret CIA flights, secret prisons - torpedoed the development of a joint anti-terror campaign. Five years after the horror of the attacks, nothing seems to be more urgent than a deepening of international cooperation. But George W. Bush should [first] restrain himself with respect to his war rhetoric and his unilateral moves."

B. (Iran) Nuclear Program

1. "Serious Or Game"

Klaus-Dieter Frankenberger commented in center-right Frankfurter Allgemeine (9/12):

"The Iranian chief negotiator in the nuclear dispute, Larijani, knows his job. He is intransigent when he realizes that the other side is weak or disunited, but he suggests compliance at a moment when the European, Russian, and Chinese protagonists, who are ready to make new concessions given Iran's intransigence, believe that sanctions are unavoidable. That is the only way to understand why Larijani suggested suspending uranium enrichment.... If Tehran pursues political and military intentions with its nuclear program, its ambition cannot be traded away. If Iran is indeed interested in using nuclear energy for civilian purposes, it must find the European incentives attractive."

2. Centrist Mannheimer Morgen editorialized (9/12):

"Tehran is not giving anything away if it suspends uranium enrichment for two months. At the moment, Iran can only produce small quantities anyway. The bomb remains a long way off.. The new offer also makes easier the position of Iran's partners, Russia and China. Both countries do not want to impose sanctions against their ally, but neither do they want to veto sanctions because it would discredit them internationally. Moscow and Beijing are therefore

interested in continuing the negotiating marathon. It would not force them to make a decision."

D. (Mideast) Hamas-Abbas Agreement

1. "Swallowing Hamas"

Thorsten Schmitz opined in center-left S|ddeutsche Zeitung of Munich (9/12):

"Only eight months after its inauguration, the Hamas-led Palestinian government faces its demise. Palestinian president and Fatah leader Abbas has proposed establishing a coalition government. But one can hardly call it a coalition. The truth is that Fatah is swallowing Hamas. With the coalition government, Abbas offers an honorary retreat to the terror group that still wants to destroy Israel, according to its statute. Hamas representative Hanija will remain prime minister, but his role is of symbolic nature.... The strategy of the U.S. administration to isolate, together with the EU, the Hamas government and to drive it into a corner has worked out.... Let's hope Abbas will persuade Hamas to recognize Israel. Otherwise, the first government crisis is foreseeable."

2. "Other Priorities"

Inge G|nther noted in left-of-center Frankfurter Rundschau (9/12):

"After a long time of back and forth, Fatah's and Hamas's pragmatic wings seem to have made a breakthrough in the efforts to establish a unity government. This is the best news we have had from the Gaza Strip in a long time. Gaza is usually known for its political hopelessness. If the exiled Islamists around Khaled Meshal do not interfere at the last minute, there is reason for the Palestinians to be hopeful. Grand coalitions are not exactly a great expression of democracy, but the priorities are different in this case. With its absolute parliamentary majority, Hamas has led Palestinians into international isolation. Most of their ministers are in Israeli prisons and the people are starving. Although one can be divided over Israeli and Western policies of sanctions, it is the result of Hamas's stubborn and hostile ideology. There are two reasons for Hamas's weaker position: Palestinian President Abbas's untiringly efforts to persuade Hamas, and the growing anger of disappointed Palestinians.... First of all, the priority of Fatah's and Hamas's common efforts must be to help establish order and social security in the Palestinian territories. If this is successful, it is an opportunity for Israel, Europe, and the peace process."

3. Reutlinger General-Anzeiger editorialized (9/12):

"The goal of the new unity government under Prime Minister Hanija will be the two-state solution, and with that to indirectly acknowledge Israel's right of existence. However, the little things often cause problems in the Middle East conflict. Israel insists on the disarmament of militant Palestinian groups and the Hamas militias, who are responsible for Shalit's kidnapping. Hanija will get the same problem Abbas had when he wanted to disarm the militant arm of Fatah."

E. (Mideast) UNIFIL Mission

1. Paul-Elmar Jris remarked in national radio station Deutschlandfunk of Cologne (9/11):

"A process must be started that secures Lebanon's sovereignty and Israel's security. In addition, it must help Palestinians establish their own state. Whatever helps achieve this goal must be supported by Germany."

2. "We Are A Party"

Richard Herzinger opined in right-of-center Die Welt of Berlin (9/12):

"When the Bundestag makes its upcoming decision on the Lebanon mission, Germany will become a party in this war. It will help

secure Israel's border against attacks and contain Hezbollah's power as far as possible. Hezbollah is not a legitimate player but a militia group that has illegally armed itself for terrorist purposes.... One cannot at all demand that we - as well as all the other European troops involved in the UN mission - should be 'neutral' in the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah. The German government has difficulties communicating this clearly to the people.... There is still the perception of Germany as a 'peace force' that goes around in the world as a friendly negotiator and is therefore cordially received everywhere. The FDP is currently benefiting from this deceitful image. With confused statements, it is trying to capitalize on the widespread German skepticism about the country's military engagement."

F. (Economic) Doha Round

1. "Everyone Will Lose"

Jrg Eigendorf opined in an editorial in right-of-center Die Welt of Berlin (9/12):

"It sounds good when industrialized nations and threshold countries express their willingness to resume the world trade talks...but no one should harbor high hopes for an early compromise on agricultural subsidies and industrial tariffs. The representatives of the various countries were unable to agree on a day or a time or a concrete timetable for their next meetings. This inability to come closer to the goal of a fair global trade is a disaster in the long term. The Internet and standardized software made possible what trade rounds will never achieve. Never before have so many people been able to take part in globalized growth.... This process and globalization are irreversible.... But if the globalization process is being slowed down, goods and services from threshold countries will no longer be able to exert pressure on prices. That is why protectionism is a bad solution to problems with which national governments are confronted. The politicians of the industrialized countries should keep this in mind. If they do not show responsibility for a free world trade, we will all lose, and primarily the industrialized countries."

TIMKEN

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